

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NAIROB 12009 111545Z
ACTION AF-10

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TAGS: PINT, KE
SUBJECT: THE ATTORNEY GENERAL SPEAKS OUT ON SOUTH AFRICA

REF: NAIROBI 7679

1. IN A TAPED INTERVIEW OF VOK TELEVISION AUGUST 8,
ATTORNEY GENERAL CHARLES NJONJO CALLED FOR RELATIONS
BETWEEN BLACK AFRICAN STATES AND SOUTH AFRICA, SAYING
THAT THE SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA IS CHANGING AND THAT
ALL BLACK AFRICAN COUNTRIES SHOULD SEND AMBASSADORS
TO PRETORIA.

2. MR. NJONJO ALSO TOOK THE OCCASION TO HIT BACK AT THE
FOREIGN MINISTRY'S CRITICISM OF DR. CHRISTIAN BARNARD
DURING THE LATTER'S RECENT VISIT TO KENYA AS MR. NJONJO'S
HOUSE GUEST (REFTEL), SAYING THAT THOSE WHO CRITICIZED
BARNARD COWARDLY HID BEHIND THE CLOAK OF ANONYMITY, AND
THEREFORE HE GAVE THEIR REMARKS THE CONTEMPT THEY DESERVED.
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WENT ON TO SAY THAT SOME OF THOSE WHO CRITICIZED

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PAGE 02 NAIROB 12009 111545Z

BARNARD WERE EDUCATED IN SOUTH AFRICA, AS WAS HE, ADDING
THAT HE HAD GOTTEN AS GOOD AN EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA AS
HE COULD HAVE GOTTEN IN THE U.S. OR THE UK.

3. BY MAKING THE EDUCATIONAL CONNECTION, NJONJO CLEARLY
POINTED HIS VERBAL ASSAULT AT THE FOREIGN MINISTER,
DR. WAIYAKI, WHO RECEIVED HIS UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION IN

SOUTH AFRICA. ALTHOUGH DR. WAIYAKI'S NAME WAS NOT MENTIONED, EVERYONE IN KENYA WILL KNOW WHO WAS MEANT. THIS PUBLIC ATTACK CONFIRMS THE BREAK BETWEEN THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER, WHICH HAS BEEN RUMORED AROUND TOWN FOR THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS. SINCE THE FOREIGN MINISTER IS CURRENTLY OUT OF THE COUNTRY ON AN OFFICIAL VISIT IN SWEDEN NO REACTION, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY FROM HIM IS EXPECTED UNTIL AFTER HIS RETURN TO KENYA IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

4. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL ALSO TOOK THE OCCASION OF THE INTERVIEW TO BLAST AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND TO REITERATE HIS DEMAND THAT THE KENYAN EDUCATION SYSTEM PRODUCE PROFESSIONALS WITH INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS, AND NOT JUST SECOND-RATERS CAPABLE OF WORKING ONLY IN KENYA.

5. IN REGARD TO AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, NJONJO ADMITTED THAT KENYA HAD "DETAINEES", BUT SAID THEIR CASES WERE REVIEWED EVERY THREE MONTHS AND CONTRASTED THE TREATMENT HERE WITH THAT IN "SOME OTHER COUNTRIES" WHERE DETAINEES SIMPLY DISAPPEARED."

6. THE ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER, HEALTH MINISTER JAMES OSOGO (WAIYAKI HAS REMAINED IN EUROPE SINCE BELGRADE NAM MEETING), HAS SINCE MADE A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S VIEWS ARE HIS OWN AND DO NOT REPRESENT THE POLICY OF THE KENYAN GOVERNMENT IN REGARD TO SOUTH AFRICA. OSOGO STATED QUOTE I WOULD LIKE TO REPEAT THAT THE KENYA LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 NAIROB 12009 111545Z

GOVERNMENT POLICY OF NOT HAVING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA HAS NOT CHANGED UNQUOTE.

7. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH NEITHER THE KENYAN GOVERNMENT NOR PUBLIC OPINION HERE IS TERRIBLY EMOTIONAL ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN ISSUE, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S VIEWS CERTAINLY ARE NOT SHARED BY MANY IN KENYA. NJONJO HAS THE REPUTATION OF BEING ICONOCLASTIC, ARROGANT AND CONTEMPTUOUS OF PUBLIC OPINION (AND ALSO OF HIS FELLOW KENYAN OPINION) AND HAS NEVER BEEN RETICENT ABOUT VOICING UNPOPULAR OPINIONS. IN THIS ASPECT HE IS VERY SIMILAR TO MALAWI'S PRESIDENT BANDA, PARTICULARLY AS CONCERNS SOUTH AFRICA. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL IS THE ONLY CABINET MEMBER NOT APPOINTED FROM AMONG THE ELECTED MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT WHICH IS FORTUNATE FOR MR. NJONJO, BECAUSE IT IS CERTAIN HE WOULD NEVER MAKE IT THROUGH THE ELECTIVE PROCESS.

8. ALTHOUGH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY FIRMLY DIVORCED ITSELF FROM MR. NJONJO'S VIEWS ON SOUTH AFRICA, THERE IS LITTLE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WILL BE REPRI-MANDED BY THE PRESIDENT OR VICE PRESIDENT FOR SO SPEAKING OUT. THE PRESIDENT REALLY PAYS ALMOST NO ATTENTION TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND THE VICE PRESIDENT IS, IN EFFECT,

MR. NJONJO'S PROTEGE AND THEREFORE HARDLY IN A POSITION TO
CRITIZE HIS MENTOR. THE DAILY NATION, WHICH OFTEN IS A
MOUTHPIECE FOR THE MOI-NJONJO FACTION, RAN AN EDITORIAL ON
AUGUST 10 PRAISING HIM FOR SPEAKING HIS MIND.

9. NEVERTHELESS, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S VIEWS COULD WELL
HURT THE VICE PRESIDENT IN HIS CAMPAIGN TO SUCCEED KENYATTA.
CERTAINLY, THE MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSING "FAMILY" FACTION OF
KANU WILL VERY PROBABLY TRY TO TAR THE VICE PRESIDENT WITH
THE BRUSH OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S UNPOPULAR OPINIONS IN
THE INTRA-PARTY POWER STRUGGLE. IT MUST BE PERFECTLY CLEAR
TO MOI THAT ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN ISSUE, THE POSITION OF THE
FOREIGN MINISTER IS FAR MORE POPULAR THAN THAT OF MR. NJONJO.
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